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13 February 1965

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# CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE BULLETIN

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CONTENTS

25X1

- 2. Laos: Communist supply convoys continuing to move into Laos. (Page 3)
- 3. Israel - Arab States: Growing domestic criticism of Eshkol government's foreign and defense policies. (Page 4)
- 4. Notes: Sudan;  Panama. (Page 5)

25X1

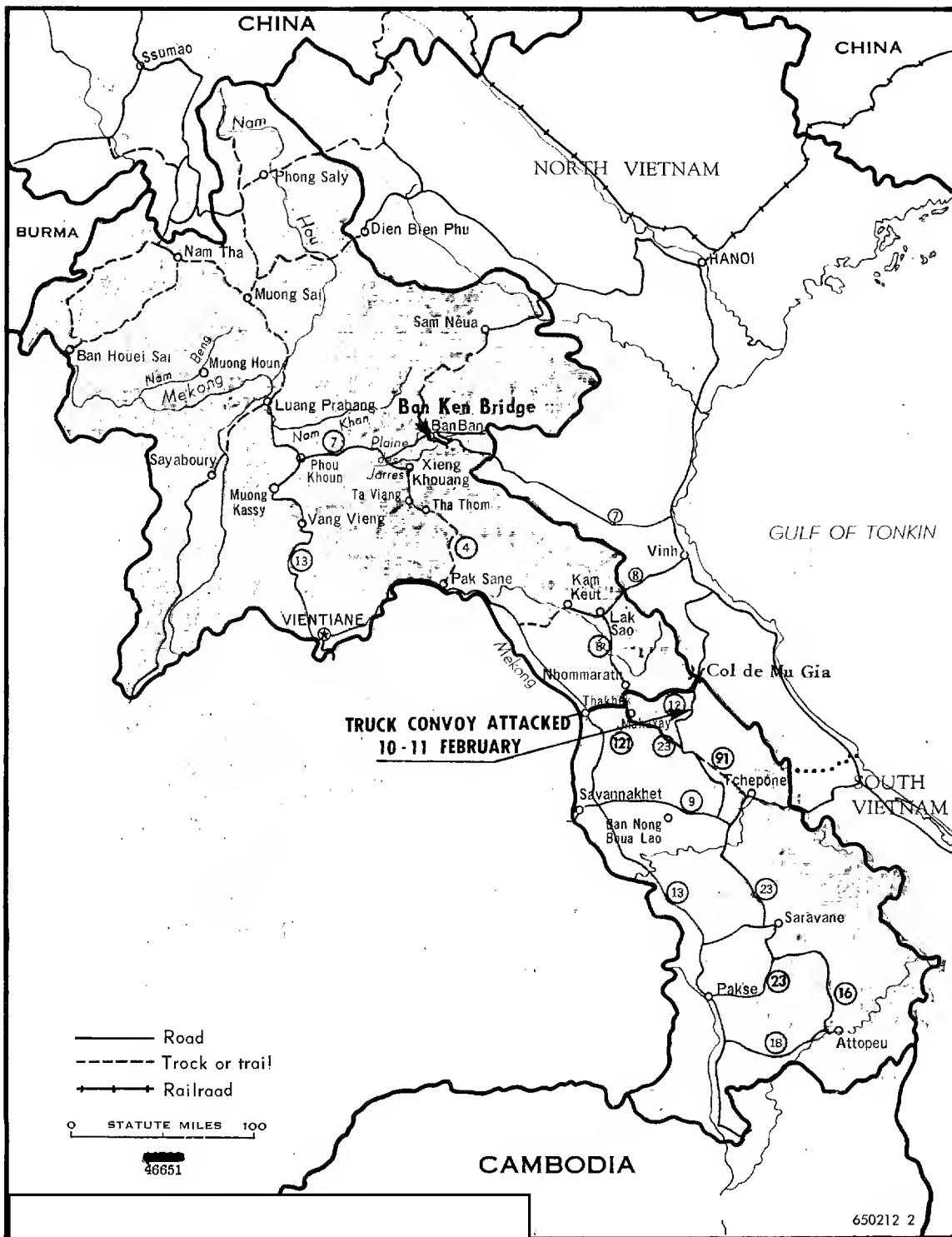
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**Next 1 Page(s) In Document Exempt**

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# LAOS



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Laos: Communist supply convoys are continuing to move into Laos.

During the period 1-11 February, approximately 115 trucks were observed entering central Laos from North Vietnam along Route 12. An estimated 450-500 North Vietnamese troops were reported accompanying the convoys on foot.

[On the night of 10-11 February, US aircraft attacked a 16-truck convoy on Route 23, a few miles south of its junction with Route 12. Several of the trucks were damaged or destroyed.]

In northern Laos, Communist truck traffic continues to move along Route 7 into the Plaine des Jarres area, using a ford to bypass a key bridge near Ban Ken destroyed by US aircraft on 13 January.

[Roadwatch teams reported traffic along the road east of Ban Ban in late January, and villagers along the road have reported substantial truck movement earlier this month.]

Israel - Arab States: Domestic criticism of the Israeli government's relatively moderate foreign and defense policies is increasing.

The withdrawal of West German military assistance to Israel as a result of Egyptian pressure, US consideration of arms aid to Jordan, and the Arabs' Jordan River diversion plans have opened the Eshkol government to charges that its policies are too "soft" and too closely tied in with the US.

Former prime minister Ben-Gurion leads a dissident minority faction within Eshkol's Mapai party which is challenging Eshkol. Leaders of the armed forces, with whom Ben-Gurion still has close relations, also are urging the adoption of more militant policies.

These pressures already have led the government to take a stronger line, opposing the provision of new US arms for Jordan and threatening action against diversion of the headwaters of the Jordan River. Last week Foreign Minister Meir told the US ambassador that "we are not going to wait until water is actually diverted."

The Ben-Gurion group's criticisms of foreign and defense policies presumably will be aired, along with Ben-Gurion's other disagreements with Eshkol, at the Mapai party convention which convenes on 15 February.

NOTES

Sudan: [The non-Communist Sudanese political parties have organized for a massive show of strength in Khartoum today. The parties' leaders, who state they can muster more than 20,000 tribal supporters in the Khartoum area, are confident that the Communist-dominated government will resign without violence, although some street fighting with leftist elements may develop. The army is expected to remain on the side lines, but most units would probably support the parties if military intervention became necessary.]

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Panama: [Foreign Minister Eleta is presently on a trip to seek private financial backing from US and possibly European firms for a sea-level canal through Panama, ]

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There have been previous indications that Eleta is interested in soliciting funds from sources other than the US Government. An initiative now could be intended to strengthen Panama's bargaining position in the current canal negotiations. ]

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